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Another warm year as Bali conference ends

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The Met Office Hadley Centre and the University of East Anglia have today released preliminary global temperature figures for 2007, which show that the top 11 warmest years all occur in the last 13 years.

The provisional global figure, using data from January to November, currently places 2007 as the seventh warmest on record since 1850.

The announcement comes as the Secretary-General of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), Michel Jarraud, speaks at the Conference of the Parties (COP) in Bali.

Scientists and politicians have been in Indonesia discussing plans to reduce greenhouse gas emissions that have been linked to increasing global temperatures.

Dr Vicky Pope from the Met Office Hadley Centre, who has been attending the conference said, "The last few days have provided an important platform for debate and confirms the need for swift action to combat further rises in global temperatures because of human behaviour."

The last time annual mean global temperatures were below the 1961-1990 long-term average was in 1985. Since then, mean surface air temperatures have continued to demonstrate a warming trend around the world. 2007 has been no exception to this, even though there has been a La Niña event which usually reduces global temperatures.

Professor Phil Jones, Director of UEA's Climatic Research Unit, said, "The year began with a weak El Niño – the warmer relation of La Niña – and global temperatures well above the long-term average. However, since the end of April the La Niña event has taken some of the heat out of what could have been an even warmer year."

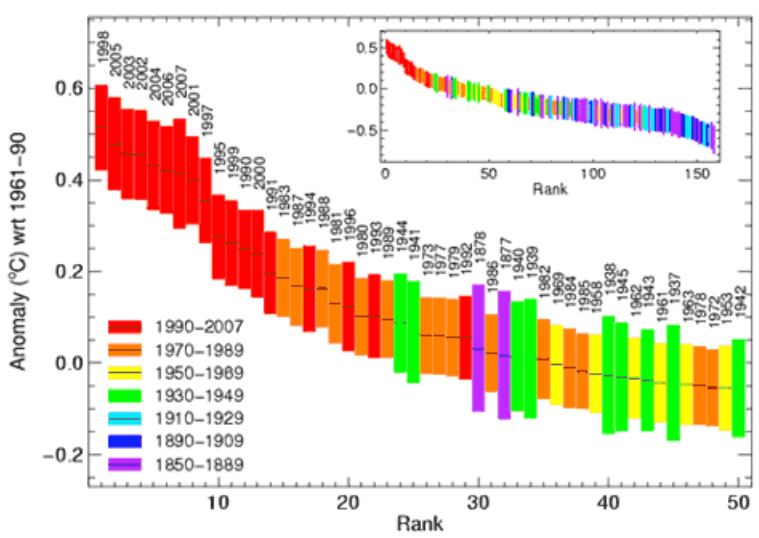
In January the Met Office, in conjunction with the University of East Anglia, predicted that 2007 could record global temperatures well above the long-term average. There was also a 60% probability that 2007 could be the warmest on record and the expected temperature for 2007 is within the range predicted.

Professor Jones said, "2007 was warmer in the Northern Hemisphere, where the year ranks second warmest, than the Southern Hemisphere, where it ranks ninth warmest."

Met Office Climate Scientist David Parker added, "This year has also seen sea-ice extent in the Northern Hemisphere below average in each month of 2007, with record minima sea-ice reported in July, August and September. In the Southern Hemisphere, sea-ice coverage has remained close to average."

Meanwhile, across the UK, 2007 is on course to become one of the warmest years on record. Even if the mean temperature for December is 1 °C below the 1971-2000 long-term average, the year will still be the third warmest since UK-wide records began in 1914. In this 94-year series, the last six years (2002-2007) are set to become the six warmest years.

150 years' temperatures



Source: Met Office Hadley Centre and UEA Climatic Research Unit

Global top 10 warmest years

Year	Difference from average (°C)
1998	+0.52
2005	+0.48
2003	+0.46
2002	+0.46
2004	+0.43
2006	+0.42
2007 (Jan-Nov)	**+0.41**
2001	+0.40
1997	+0.36
1995	+0.28

UK top 10 warmest years

Year	Difference from average (°C)
2006	+1.15
2007 (Jan-Nov)	**+1.10**
2003	+ 0.92
2004	+ 0.89
2002	+ 0.89
2005	+ 0.87
1990	+ 0.83
1997	+ 0.82
1949	+ 0.80
1999	+ 0.78

Difference from average with respect to 1961-90

Difference from average with respect to 1971-2000

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Notes

- The El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO) phenomenon is a large-scale, natural fluctuation of the ocean-atmosphere system centred across the tropical to sub-tropical Indo-Pacific region. Through teleconnections to higher latitudes in both hemispheres, ENSO impacts can extend to near-global dimensions during strong phases of its El Niño or La Niña extremes.

For further information: